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**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please cancel claim 21.

Please amend claims 14, 22, and 23 as follows:

1. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A holder for assisting in holding a paint container, comprising:

a cylindrical sleeve adapted to receive a thumb of a hand and having a longitudinal axis; and

a retainer having a wall with a first end connected to said sleeve, said first end being fixed relative to said sleeve, said wall having a second end extending generally perpendicular to said longitudinal axis of said sleeve to overlap a circumferential portion of said sleeve, said retainer being adapted to be attached to and detached from a handle of a paint container, whereby the retainer is attached to the handle and the sleeve receives the thumb of the hand to allow a weight of the paint container to be transferred to a remainder of the hand supporting at a bottom of the paint container.

2. (CANCELED)

✓  
3. (ORIGINAL) A holder as set forth in claim 1 wherein said sleeve is generally tubular in shape.

4. (ORIGINAL) A holder as set forth in claim 1 wherein said sleeve extends longitudinally to form a hollow interior.

<sup>4</sup>  
5. (ORIGINAL)

A holder as set forth in claim 4<sup>3</sup> wherein said sleeve has at least one open end adapted to allow the thumb of the hand to extend into said hollow interior.

6. (CANCELED)

<sup>5</sup>  
7. (ORIGINAL)

A holder as set forth in claim 1 wherein said sleeve is made of a flexible material.

8. (CANCELED)

9. (CANCELED)

<sup>6</sup>  
10. (ORIGINAL)

A holder as set forth in claim 1 wherein said retainer has a general "U" shape.

<sup>7</sup>  
11. (ORIGINAL)

A holder as set forth in claim 1 wherein said retainer is made of a spring material.

<sup>8</sup>  
12. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)

A holder as set forth in claim 1 wherein said first end and said second end form a hollow interior therebetween.

<sup>9</sup>  
13. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED)

A holder as set forth in claim 1 wherein said second end is movable relative to said first end.

<sup>11</sup>~~14~~. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A holder for assisting in holding a paint container, comprising:

a cylindrical sleeve extending longitudinally to form a hollow interior with at least one open end adapted to receive a thumb of a hand, said sleeve being unitary circumferentially; and

a retainer having a first end connected to said sleeve and a second end extending generally perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of said sleeve to overlap a portion of said sleeve, said retainer extending from and being unitary and one-piece with said sleeve, said retainer being adapted to be attached to and detached from a handle of a paint container, whereby the retainer is attached to the handle and the sleeve receives the thumb of the hand to allow a weight of the paint container to be transferred to a remainder of the hand supporting a bottom of the paint container.

15. (CANCELED)

16. (CANCELED)

<sup>11</sup>~~17~~. (ORIGINAL) A holder as set forth in claim <sup>10</sup>~~14~~ wherein said sleeve is made of a flexible material.

18. (CANCELED)

<sup>12</sup>~~19~~. (ORIGINAL) A holder as set forth in claim <sup>10</sup>~~14~~ wherein said retainer has a general "U" shape.

<sup>13</sup>  
20. (ORIGINAL) A holder as set forth in claim <sup>14</sup> wherein said retainer is made of a spring material.

21. (CANCELED)

<sup>14</sup>  
22. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A holder as set forth in claim <sup>10</sup> ~~21~~ <sup>14</sup> wherein ~~said first end extends from said sleeve and~~ said second end is movable relative to said first end.

<sup>15</sup>  
23. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A holder comprising:  
a cylindrical sleeve having a wall extending longitudinally to form a hollow interior with at least one open end adapted to receive a thumb of a hand; and  
a retainer having a first end extending from said wall of said sleeve and a second end extending generally perpendicular to a longitudinal axis of said sleeve to overlap a portion of said sleeve, said sleeve and retainer being made of a plastic material to form a monolithic structure that is unitary and one-piece, said retainer being adapted to be attached to and detached from a handle of a paint container, whereby the retainer is attached to the handle and the sleeve receives the thumb of the hand to allow a weight of the paint container to be transferred to a remainder of the hand supporting a bottom of the paint container.